

THE REAL GLORY OF A CHURCH.

A

**DEDICATION SERMON,**

PREACHED IN

**FAYETTEVILLE, NORTH-CAROLINA,**

AT THE

**OPENING OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,**

WHICH WAS

**DESTROYED BY FIRE**

IN THE

CONFLAGRATION OF THE TOWN ON THE 29th OF MAY, 1831, AND RE-BUILT  
AND DEDICATED AUGUST 12th, 1832.

TO WHICH IS APPENDED

AN ACCOUNT OF THE

**DESTRUCTION OF FAYETTEVILLE.**

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**BY HENRY A. ROWLAND, Jun.**

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

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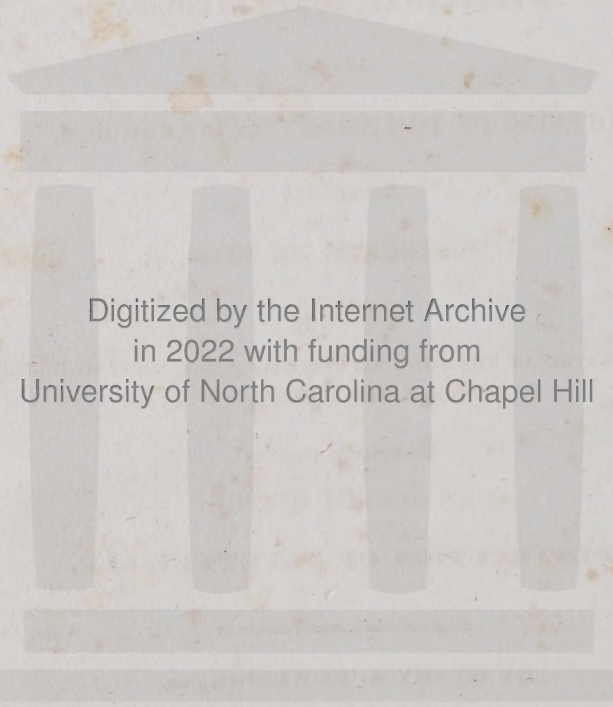
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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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The nature of the occasion, rather than any merit which the author conceives to be attached to this discourse, irrespective of individual wishes expressed for its publication, render it proper in his view to give it to the public. He does this in the hope that it may be the means of retaining the remembrance of that event which gave occasion for the exercise of such unexampled kindness ; and that it may be a testimony to the power of Christian sympathy, and the liberality of Christian benevolence.

The nature of the subject rather than any result  
which the author conceives to be attached to this  
discourse, is the object of his study, and he is  
for the publication of a paper in the view to  
give it to the public. It is his hope that  
it may be the means of raising the consideration  
of that great subject which is the subject of the  
of some examples, and that it may be a  
contribution to the cause of Christian benevolence.  
the philosophy of Christian benevolence.



# SERMON.

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**Haggai, 2 : 9.**

THE GLORY OF THIS LATTER HOUSE SHALL BE GREATER THAN  
THE GLORY OF THE FORMER, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.

THE occasion on which we are assembled naturally leads our minds to reflect on the loving kindness and tender mercy of God. Who could have believed that the day of our calamity would so soon have been followed by one, in which we should feel called on, with the remembrance of past afflictions, to notice in so public a manner the striking manifestations of his goodness? What heart which was then sensible to the destruction of our temporal hopes, can fail to recognize his gracious hand in the way by which we have hitherto been led?

The evil which befell us was a desolation unheard of in the accidental ravages of the devouring element. It swept away, as with the besom of destruction, our hopes of worldly prosperity, and laid the temples of our God in ashes. Who can, even now, recall the dismay of that moment without feelings of alarm? Who can describe the horror which spread through every breast, to behold, as in a moment, our dwellings and our sanctuaries enveloped in a whirlwind of flame—suddenly to find, in the midst of our homes,

a burning monster, whose breath was desolation ; whose rage no art could tame, no power destroy ; who swallowed up the affluent in a moment, and left the widow and the orphan shelterless : who seemed to sport in the very miseries he created, and signalized himself only by the complete and utter destruction of every thing within his reach ! Words failed to describe our emotions. One deep and universal feeling of despair seemed to reign in every breast, and fill every countenance with gloom. As far as the eye could reach it met nothing but the unsightly view of ruins, except here and there the smouldering of some half extinguished pile. Nothing was left but the hearth, around whose cheerful blaze we had been wont to meet, and which brought to our remembrance scenes which had past, and which with gloomy forebodings we anticipated would never again return. We went that night to the protection of some friendly shelter, but not to our homes. If there could have been found language to express, in a short and impressive manner, our condition, it was the touching and significant description of the prophet, “ Our holy and our beautiful house where our fathers praised thee is burnt up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste.”

But a new scene has now opened before us. We meet, not on the ruins of past devastation, but in this house which has since been reared for the worship of God. We see around us, touched with the untiring hand of human industry, as with the fabled wand of enchantment, these ruins disappearing from our view,



and in their place whole streets arising at once from the ashes, and resounding with the hum of business. We cannot view the changes which the past year has witnessed, and remember the kindness which in every part of our country was felt for our distress, and which poured forth to our relief the most sensible tokens of their sympathy, without feeling that the Lord hath done great things for us, "whereof we are glad." Since we are now met to dedicate to his service this building made with hands, let us lift up to him our earnest desires that the prediction of the text may be accomplished with respect to us; that "the glory of this latter house may be greater than the glory of the former."

Without dwelling on the analogy which may be presumed to exist between the second Jewish temple and our own, I shall proceed to mention some things in which the glory of this our latter house may exceed the glory of the former, and then make such practical remarks as may be suggested by a review of the past dealings of God's providence with us, and by the occasion on which we meet.

I am, first, to notice several things in which the glory of this our latter house may exceed the glory of the former.

It is a *monument of Christian benevolence*, and a *renewed evidence of God's goodness*. We remember the despondency with which we once stood on these former ruins and contemplated the destruction of our hopes. But now we assemble on this spot, consecrated to God, to rejoice in that goodness which hath

again restored to us the privileges of the sanctuary. As we sit here to enjoy the blessings of this sacred place, we cannot fail to ask, who, amidst the deprivation of our worldly hopes, hath administered to our relief? What hand hath reared from the dust this goodly structure, and reanimated our fallen countenances? It is the kind hand of Christian charity—that unseen hand which is moved by a heart of Christian sympathy to extend its blessings to all who are in need—which searches out with assiduity the humblest child of want, and while it reaches forth the blessings of the Gospel to the poor and untaught of other lands, leaves not the unfortunate at home to the bitterness of neglect. It is to this hand that we owe the privileges of this sacred place. While we render to our benefactors, individually and collectively, the tribute of a grateful heart, let it not be forgotten that this house honors the religion we profess, because it exhibits the triumph of Christian sympathy over the natural selfishness of man. It shows the strength of that Christian attachment by which the whole spiritual body is united together under Christ the living head. It is a token of love, and a sure pledge that so long as Christian influence shall continue to bless the world, it will be exerted to alleviate human wo; to hasten the progress of peace and good will till it shall carry into every land, and diffuse among all nations, the holy and benevolent spirit of Jesus. Let this house, then, be consecrated as a monument of Christian benevolence. Let there never be witnessed an appeal made here to our



Christian sympathies in vain ; and from whatever quarter it shall rise in its majestic beauty upon our eye, let it carry the impression to our hearts, whenever the sacred cause of humanity is pleaded, that as ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so to them. Let it bear down to other generations a testimony which is so honorable to the Gospel which we love and cherish.

But in rendering this just tribute to our Christian friends, we are not to forget the goodness of God in the direction of this joyful event : we acknowledge his gracious hand in the supply of all our mercies ; and in this kind regard of our spiritual wants, he hath turned our mourning into laughter, and our heaviness into joy. The man who can look with a cold selfishness on every thing he possesses, and feel that for it he is indebted only to his own wisdom and strength, hath not yet learned the elements of religion, and will find on every side evidence enough to stumble his self-taught faith. But the Christian finds his happiness in the very exercise of grateful feelings toward God. They are the emotions of a child toward its parent. He delights to cherish them. They are not servile, but honorable. They honor God ; and are appropriate to us as beings constantly dependent on his bounty. We should feel that the blessings we now enjoy are the gift of his immeasurable goodness ; nor should we fail to render to him the constant tribute of grateful praise.

Again ; the more *clear and faithful exhibition of the sacred truth*, may confer a glory on this house which

the other did not possess. It is the dignity and importance of the purpose to which this sacred building is appropriated which confers upon it its glory. The ancient Jewish temple was far more magnificent than the new, and it had the Urim and Thummim, and the ark of the covenant, which the latter had not ; but it wanted that which no worldly splendor could give it, the presence and instruction of Jesus. These have lost none of their value or their interest by the lapse of ages. It still remains true, that of all places which are erected for sacred purposes, that is the most glorious where the doctrines of Jesus Christ, and him crucified, are the most faithfully preached. Should this pulpit be the means of propagating other sentiments than the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it would, in the view of his true disciples, like the ancient temple when it had ceased to be a house of prayer, lose all its glory.

But there is reason to believe, not only that this event will not occur, but that those who minister here will exceed in faithfulness and success those who have gone before them. This belief is not derived from a knowledge of defect in the faithfulness of former ministrations, but from the character of the present age. Since the time when the church was disenthralled from her spiritual bondage, there has been a gradual improvement in the mode of exhibiting the truth from the pulpit. During the period of the reformation the pulpit was made almost entirely subservient to party purposes. It was filled with the creatures of the existing government, and those

were ejected whose opinions and influence it could not control. Little else was to be heard from it but the violent discussions of controversy. In later times it is no discredit to the holy men who, like Baxter, Owen, Whitfield, and Edwards, have risen, at different periods, with primitive purity and power to proclaim the truth, to say that their example was not generally followed. Never, at any age, has the preaching of the Gospel so generally assumed the point, the energy, and success of its primitive ministration, as at the present time. Its results now more nearly resemble the results of apostolic ministration. The church has been roused up to make more vigorous efforts for the advancement of Christ's kingdom than ever; and converts, praying devoted converts, are flocking into his fold. Why should it not be so, as the day of millennial glory is drawing nigh? It is what, from the predictions of the sacred word, we have a right to expect. Nor is there reason to believe that the truth will not be still more faithfully preached in the ages to come. It is vain to presume that we have arrived at that point of perfection which is not to be exceeded. O no, my brethren. The pulpit is destined to be still more faithful to the souls of men. A deeper and stronger tone of piety is to pervade the ministry, and a holier incense is to arise from the altar of the sanctuary before the glorious days of Zion shall come. There will be no new Gospel preached; but this, as to its faithfulness and power of application to the consciences of men, shall be divested of every thing



which will prevent it from becoming more eminently successful in winning souls to Christ. Here may stand the man, who, with the holy eloquence of a blameless life, and with the spirit and power of an apostle, shall more successfully move the heart than any who have gone before him. These walls may reverberate with the voice of more earnest and thrilling appeal to the wandering sinner. These seats may be filled with more urgent inquirers after salvation. Here the more powerful influences of the Holy Spirit may seal the truth, and the solemn stillness of the multitudes who assemble here be broken by the half suppressed sigh of a wounded spirit, or the more audible inquiries of the burdened soul, "Men and brethren what shall we do." Here, too, may the Savior, in that same hour, speak peace to the troubled conscience, while angels in heaven rejoice over the sinners saved. In all this power and successfulness of the truth this house may be more glorious than the former.

Another event which may confer glory on this house is, that it may be the *means of cultivating a higher state of Christian feeling and effort* in those who worship here. The period is gone by when it can even be pretended that the church of Christ may innocently slumber. The truth, "My kingdom is not of this world," is taking a deep and a strong hold on the hearts of Christians. "Occupy till I come," is a command which is now interpreted to extend down to the lowest talents which are found in the ranks of the Redeemer. It is not the minis-

ters, and the office bearers in the church only, who are accountable as intrusted with sacred duties ; but it is all who have talents to influence, wealth to promote, example to commend, or faith to plead for the coming of Christ's kingdom. There is no danger that the church will be subverted by the efforts of private Christians for its spiritual advancement, so long as these efforts are confined to that sphere of duty which the Gospel assigns them, and are mingled with faith, and humble dependence on God. In the spiritual body of Christ, " the eye cannot say to the hand I have no need of thee ; nor again the head to the feet I have no need of you ;" but the influence, example, and substance of all, however humble, must be consecrated to his service. There is a station which every one who has a heart to do something for Christ may occupy. In the army of salvation it is the prayers and labors of individual Christians united which make her a terror to her enemies, and mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds. She advances in purity and in power, when she advances in holiness, and in conformity to the spirit of her Savior. The glory of a church consists in the spiritual-mindedness and uniform consistency of those who belong to it. This is its real glory. This rendered Zion the joy of the whole earth, and made the city of God glorious. It is not confined to the church as a body ; it diffuses itself abroad ; it hallows the very doors of the sanctuary, and marks that spot as the loveliest where the children of God have been most blest. Such were the feelings of

the Psalmist when he said, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts ; my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord."

The increased devotedness of Christians may be the means of conferring a glory on this house which the other never possessed. Here may the reviving and blessed influences of the Spirit be given in answer to their prayers, and the mighty wheels of benevolent effort be rolled onward which shall bear the joyful tidings of salvation to every land. Here may multitudes press forward and join themselves to those who are walking in love and holiness onward to the heavenly Canaan. O how glorious will Zion of the Lord appear when there shall be nothing to hurt or offend in all his holy mountain. When the spirit of Christ shall pervade the breast of all who meet here, and with one heart and one voice they shall mingle their praises. When they shall carry forth into the world the sacred emotions which are here enkindled, and a living Christianity, with its holy influence, shall bless every spot where sin had reigned.

This house may exceed the former in glory in its being *honored with the more evident presence of Jesus*. It is not the visible splendor of a sacred edifice which renders it glorious in the eye of the Christian, so much as the Savior's presence which is manifested there. There may be much to catch the eye, and awaken pride, in the pomp of superficial decoration, but the Christian's affections are kindled by communion with that invisible Savior who deigns to visit with his blessing every spot where his children



meet. It is the dignity and the glory of the being who invests the place, that in the eye of the Christian disciple confers on the meanest solitude which is sought for prayer, more real honor than a palace. Hence the ancient disciples left the goodly stones of the Jewish temple, and all its fictitious glory, for the real presence of Jesus in the dens and caves of the earth. These were more glorious in their view than the accumulated wealth and splendor of ages in a place where, through the predominance of a false religion, the Savior was excluded.

If Christ should deign to visit this sanctuary with the more evident demonstrations of his presence, it would indeed become more glorious in our view. It is an event which we ought confidently to expect, and most earnestly to seek. He has promised to be in the place where his disciples meet. In proportion as they desire his presence it will be given them. We have been taught by our own experience the folly of trusting in the world; and it may lead us to repose our confidence in that heavenly friend, and more faithfully to serve him. Assembled as his disciples, we may more sensibly feel his gracious visitations. Seasons of communion may become seasons of higher joy. Here may the afflicted receive comfort, the disconsolate be cheered with hope, the despairing relieved, and the heavy-laden sinner find rest. Here may there be an asylum for the wretched, where, into the ear of the Savior, may be poured those griefs which are ineffable, except to him who knows the heart which feels them, and with an

unseen, but gracious hand, can dry up their source. Here may be erected the mercy seat where Jesus shall give audience and acceptance to the fond parent who approaches, with humble faith, to plead for the salvation of his children. To those who here gather around the sacramental board, the presence of Jesus may make it a heaven on the earth. Angels, and spirits of the just, invisible, may attend their Lord and unite in the praises which shall ascend from the hearts of his humble worshippers. In all this real excellency of the Savior's presence, this latter house may be more glorious than the former.

This house may be rendered more glorious by the *outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the conversion of sinners*. This event is intimately connected with the glory of Christ's church. The conversion of one sinner occasions joy in the presence of the angels of God ; and surely, by the multiplied triumphs of Almighty grace, the Christian's heart must be made glad. In no respect does the church more nearly resemble that of ancient times, than in the revivals of religion which are increasing its numbers and adding to its graces. Revivals are the gift of God, which he may confer how and when he pleases, but which he doth not see fit to withhold from the humble faith and earnest supplications of his children. Till within a few years they have been comparatively infrequent. In the lapse of a large portion of the visible church from its primeval purity, it had almost been forgotten that revivals were its birthright. They were regarded as the product of a miraculous age, rather than the

result of faith, prayer, and effort, accompanied with the blessings of God's Spirit. When the church began to go back to the Bible, and revivals returned to bless the world, they were by many viewed as the overflowings of enthusiasm, the devices of the enemy. Strange that the work of the blessed Jesus, by which the eyes of so many blind sinners have been opened, should, in this age, and by such men, be regarded as the work of Satan! But the saint who, with deeply imbued piety had drawn his opinions from the oracles of truth, and who while he prayed was watching, lifted up his eyes and saw with joy that the angel bearing the everlasting Gospel had begun his flight through the midst of heaven.

Revivals are yielding back to the church its primitive glory. In proportion as their blessings are experienced, they will be more earnestly sought. They will multiply the friends of the Redeemer, and enable the church to sustain and carry forward its mighty plans of benevolence. Does the field of the world seem too vast, the people scattered over it too ignorant, and the church too weak? Let her go forward with a strong faith, and in the spirit of dependence, and God will raise up friends for her. Does she see dissension at home, and tremble lest she should be obliged to retire before her work is accomplished? Let her still go forward. The Lord shall pour out his Spirit, and the waves of dissension shall be rolled to the shore. The silver and the gold of her former enemies shall be brought with a friendly hand to the Lord, and their revilings be turned into the voice of



praise. "I will pour out my Spirit," said God, "upon all flesh." In the accomplishment of this event the church will be rendered glorious. It will extend its glory to the very place where the people of God meet ; and this house, which is reared with hands, may become the spiritual birthplace of many a burdened soul. Precious in their sight will be the Bethel where they find the Lord. Glorious indeed will be this sanctuary, if it should become the gate of heaven to those who worship here.

It is the anticipation of this event which confers an amazing interest on this sacred place. Why have these walls been reared, and these seats filled with a crowd of earnest listeners ? It is because the Savior here meets with his disciples ; and, humbled at his feet, sinners too may taste his grace. Here they may obtain deliverance from sin. Here they may learn to sustain every trial which flesh is heir to, and to descend into the grave with the song of victory. Who can tell what accessions may be made to the songs and praises of eternity by the worship of this house ? The saints in heaven who here find the Savior, may look down with interest on this holy spot where they first tasted of Redeeming love, and it may be held by them in everlasting remembrance. Thus are we encouraged to believe that the glory of this latter house may exceed the glory of the former in all that which constitutes the real glory of an earthly temple.

I proceed, secondly, to make such practical remarks as are suggested by the past dealing of God's

providence with us, and by the occasion on which we meet.

We are taught by our past affliction *to form a right estimate of the value of earthly things, and to lay up our treasure in heaven.* When we behold the hopes which have been long fastened on worldly objects, in a moment dissipated, it should be an instructive lesson to admonish us not to estimate them beyond their real value. How often do we hear it said that riches take to themselves wings and fly away. But we cannot believe it till we have proved it by our own experience. We are unwilling to be taught by others, but must make the trial ourselves of how little value the world is, compared with our souls. Happy will it be for us, if we are not left to gain this knowledge in eternity. The counsel of God's word is, that the time is short. "It remaineth that they that weep, be as those that wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away." This we are convinced is true; yet we do not have that abiding sense of it which is given by the actual vision of our hopes on the wing to leave us. Can there be an event which should more deeply impress us with the transitory nature of earthly things, than that which is this day brought to our remembrance? It is the dictate of true wisdom to estimate things according to their real worth. But if, notwithstanding the evidence of the sacred truth, and the

light we derive from our past experience, we are not yet convinced that it is best to lay up our treasures in heaven, we need but wait for the judgment day, when we shall see our error in the light of a conflagrated world.

Here the treasures we lay up are corruptible. A thousand dangers lay in wait to strip the rich man of his wealth, or beset the path of him who would become rich ; they haunt his sleeping moments, and fill him with constant alarm. But the man who lays up his treasures in heaven is secure against disappointment. He has peace of mind in their possession, and eternal satisfaction in their enjoyment ; for moth and rust cannot corrupt, neither can thieves break through and steal, and no devouring element can reach them.

The satisfaction which a man enjoys by the possession of wealth is but momentary. Admit that for threescore years and ten he shall have undisputed possession of all that he can use, yet then he will be poor. Death will render him as poor as the meanest slave. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out of it. But he who lays up his treasures in heaven is rich. As he advances in life, the richer he becomes in expectancy, till death puts him in possession of it all. The man whose wealth is on the earth, at the judgment day will rise a poor man, shorn of all his splendor. Here on the earth, it is true, are the monuments of his pride, his houses, his lands, and his fine estates ; but then he can enjoy them no longer. The world is in



flames, and all is lost. But the Christian's possessions are not imperiled by the changes of that dread moment. His riches no man can take from him. He will find them all when he shall awake in the likeness of his Redeemer : and when all things temporal shall be dissolved he can stand upon the smouldering ruins of the world, and feel that its loss is his unspeakable gain.

We may learn the importance of being *constantly prepared to meet every danger to which we are exposed*. The suddenness of our temporal calamities, in general, leaves no time for preparation. They come as in a moment. Like the traveler in the Arabian desert who sees the approaching whirlwind, and scarcely essays to escape before he is buried beneath a mountain of sand ; so unexpected are the evils we suffer. Perhaps when we think all is prosperous, and sit contentedly beneath the shade of our gourd, there is a worm at its root which suddenly cuts down the object of our hope. Death, like a strong man armed, breaks into our enclosure and bears off a beloved friend. We had often watched over that friend in sickness, and seen him recover, and we fondly expect that it will be so again. It is not till that eye is set, that pulse ceases to beat, and that dying gasp, that we feel that he is gone. Death is at last as unexpected as if he had not signified his approach. Thus it is in the case of a dying friend, and so it may be with us. If we are not prepared for death while in health, we shall not be prepared on its approach. If we have not that reconciliation

to God, through the blood of his Son, which will arm us against every worldly fear and danger, we shall not possess it when that fear is awakened, and that danger comes. We may insure our property against the devouring element, but no assurance will stand the soul against the fires of God's wrath, but that which is now effected by believing in the Son of God. Let your faith then now fasten on the Savior. Make him your friend who hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and you shall be sustained by his arm when all who do not make that arm their trust shall sink in everlasting ruin.

My friends, are you still impenitent? What means shall God use more effectually to convince you of the vanity of your worldly hopes than those which he has already employed? Say not that if we had lived in the days of the apostles, when signs and wonders were wrought, we should have believed; but open your eyes to the course you now pursue in the midst of the warnings of his providence, and the invitations of his mercy. Let the scenes of terror you have witnessed remind you of the judgment day, when the Almighty Judge shall descend in all his pomp and majesty from heaven, and the voice of the archangel shall break the slumbers of the dead. Sudden will be the occurrence of that event. Weak, indeed, is language to paint the scenes which will then burst on your view. As it was in the day when God rained fire out of heaven upon Sodom, such will be the terror of that day to the wicked. They shall call on the mountains and on the rocks to hide them,

from the face of him that sitteth on the throne. The cloud of God's indignation is growing darker and darker over your head; and when on that day, like the collected thunders of the universe, it shall burst upon the wicked, where will you stand; what power can shield you from the arm of the angry Judge?

But see yonder! Who are those arrayed in white robes, with palms in their hands? No terror clouds their brow—no wrath drives them headlong down the abyss. Hark! What music rises from those harps of gold? What rapturous songs of joy burst from those lips? What shout of victory is that? It is the voice of the redeemed—of that multitude which no man can number, returning to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads. O happy, happy throng! who have seen the miserable end of all who trusted in the world, and go now to enjoy the treasures laid up for you in heaven—in that world where there is no night, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God shall them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

Do you enjoy, my Christian friends, the glorious hope of thus meeting your Savior? Cultivate, I beseech you, a nearer and more intimate communion with him. Let it be the object of your life to glorify God your Redeemer. Be warned by his providence to fix on him your hopes, so shall you abide safe beneath the shadow of his wings.

Finally; the circumstances of mercy in which we are met demand of us *entire devotedness to his service*. The goodness of God hath shone out from



behind the cloud which for a season obscured his glory. Our terror is exchanged for joy; our despondency for hope; and we are now enabled, with the eye of faith, to view the glory of God to be displayed in this sanctuary. What, then, are the emotions of your hearts, who, for the first time, assemble here? Is it your desire that the glory of this latter house may exceed the glory of the former? Do you wish to behold saints rejoicing here, and sinners flocking to the Savior? Is your heart kindled by the distant prospect of the coming glory of Christ's kingdom; and do your prayers even now ascend for his blessing to be poured out upon this sacred place? Remember that the victory is not yet won. You have duties to perform; and on the faithful performance of them depends, in a high degree, the future glory of this church. It depends on you whether the labors of a devoted, faithful, and self-denying ministry, shall here be sustained; or whether, through your worldliness or indifference, it shall fail of that success which your cordial support and co-operation can give it. It depends on you whether the Gospel shall here be preached in its purity, and the flame of piety continue to burn with increasing brightness, or its light shall become feeble and extinct. It depends on you whether this house shall be a house of prayer, and promote the peace, union and holiness of this church, or be the occasion of its dissension and ruin. It depends on you, under God, whether the abundant refreshings of his grace shall be here enjoyed, or the fair hopes of Zion, through your sterility, be blasted. It depends

on you whether the plans formed for the glory of Christ's kingdom shall be carried forward ; or fail, to the derision of the churches enemies, and the dishonor of God.

Whether this church will share or not in the prospective glory of the Redeemer's kingdom, one thing is certain ; that if you who enjoy these sacred privileges fail to improve them, it may be the burden of your sorrow for eternity, that here there was a feast of love spread, but you would not taste ; that here the streams of mercy flowed, but you would not drink ; that here the gate of heaven was open, but you would not enter it. May this day, in which we dedicate this sanctuary, be the day of your consecration to God. Let your heart now go forth to meet the Savior ; renounce your sins, and by faith in Jesus lay hold on life eternal.

In the prospect of the coming glory of Christ's kingdom, and with earnest prayer that God would glorify himself by granting the blessings of his presence to those who worship here, it becomes us solemnly to set apart this house for his service. Come, then, my brethren, and unite with me in dedicating this sacred structure to him.

O GOD, who art invisible, but who with thy presence dost visit every spot where thy children meet, this sanctuary, reared from the ashes, the token of thy love, we dedicate to thee ! FATHER in heaven, who dost watch over thy creatures with paternal tenderness, and whose severest chastisements are mingled with mercy, we consecrate it to thee !

JESUS our SAVIOR, Lamb of God, who died for us, and with thy blood dost cleanse away our sin, to thee we dedicate it! HOLY SPIRIT, the Life of our souls, our Sanctifier and Comforter, we consecrate it to thee! Let these walls, O God, this sacred desk, these seats, and all these thy creatures who bow before thee, be for ever devoted to thy service. Withhold not thy presence on account of our sins, but fill this place with thy glory. Delight to bless this sanctuary. Here meet with thy children, and satisfy the desires of their souls. Here may the Gospel be preached in its purity, and be accompanied with the abundant tokens of thy favor. May the glory of this latter house be greater than the glory of the former. Let those who worship here love thy sacred name, and bear down thy praise to other generations.

Impart thy blessing to those whose Christian kindness we have experienced. May they, with us, be found at last among the ransomed of the Lord, in that world where thy glorious presence is seen and felt. And when our worship on earth shall be finished, let us rise with songs of joy to recommence thy praise in thine everlasting temple on high. And to God only wise, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, shall be rendered eternal praises. Amen.



## APPENDIX.

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The account which is given of the destruction of Fayetteville, in the following letters and communication, may be interesting to those who wish to retain the remembrance of that event. The first letter was written on the night of the fire, and conveyed the first intelligence of this calamity to many who reside in the northern section of the country. It was my intention to have written a narrative of the principal facts, and appended it to this discourse; but it is presumed more interest will attach itself to those descriptions which were given at the time.

*To the Editor of the National Gazette.*

FAYETTEVILLE, N. C., May 29, 1831.

SIR—FAYETTEVILLE IS NO MORE!—This morning the sun rose upon us in its beauty, and with gladdened hearts we flocked to the churches of our God—now we are in ruins. But two stores of all that this place contained are standing. The rest are entirely consumed. Nothing but stacks of tottering chimneys remain to tell what we once were.

Except in the outskirts of the town, and in those streets which are a little off from the centre of our town, not a dwelling house remains. All the churches, with the exception of the Methodist, which is distant from the centre of the town, are destroyed. The academy, the two splendid hotels, our printing offices, the two banks, the old state house, every apothecary's shop, and some of our mills, are in ashes.

The fire communicated, (it is supposed,) from a chimney, precisely in the centre of the town, and spread with inconceivable rapidity through every street. It was just after the congregation had been dismissed, about half past 12 o'clock, when the fire was first discovered, and in less than one hour and a half, our village was literally a "sea of flame." The goods were consumed in the streets, the engines were burnt at their stands. Some who had property removed to a distance in expectation of safety, were disappointed; too soon the devouring element reached them. The churches, though at a distance from each other, were soon in flames. The tall steeple of the Presbyterian church seemed a pyramid of fire; for a while it stood firm, soon the bell descended with a crash—the steeple trembled, tottered and fell. The Episcopal church, which apparently caught at the same time, was soon in ashes.

As I wandered through the outskirts of the place to administer relief, so far as possible, to the distressed, my heart sunk within me. The sick were borne out of their houses, and were lying on pallets in the street. Others, faint and exhausted, were reclining on the beds which had been thrown out. Every moment our ears were stunned with the explosion of powder, to demolish the buildings, which might stay the flames. But although many were thus levelled, there was not strength to pull the timbers from the reach of the conflagration.

It is impossible to paint the heart rending scenes which every where occurred. Parents were inquiring for their children, and children for their parents, and in every countenance reigned despair.

I have been round the fire in every direction, and the above statements are the result of my own observation. From where I now write I can perceive, for the extent of nearly half a mile, the light which flashes up from the smouldering ruins. A very small portion of the property was insured. Most of the people *lost their all!* Our distress may be partially imagined, but cannot be justly conceived of. Much bodily injury was experienced, but, so far as it is at present known, no lives were lost. What results may be ascertained when our friends are collected, it is impossible to say.

Yours with respect,

HENRY A. ROWLAND, Junr.

*To the Editors of the New-York Journal of Commerce.*

FAYETTEVILLE, N. C., May 30, 1831.

GENTLEMEN—By this time you must have heard that FAYETTEVILLE IS IN ASHES. But two, or at most three stores, at the foot of Haymount, are all that remain standing; all the rest are entirely consumed. Three churches, the academy, the two banks, the two splendid hotels, the old state house, the printing offices, and as nearly as can be estimated, one hundred and five stores, independently of warehouses, dwelling houses, and out houses of various descriptions, and mills, occupying an area of about half a square mile, are completely burnt up. The fire took yesterday soon after the several congregations were dismissed from worship, about fifteen minutes before one o'clock, and springing from roof to roof, it spread with such amazing rapidity that in one hour and a half the column of smoke and flame seemed to rise from the whole town at once. I have often witnessed conflagrations in our cities, but never before did I behold an universal *annihilation*. Except the scattering houses in the streets off from our village, the dwelling houses are all destroyed. The goods which were thrown into the streets, or conveyed, as it was supposed, at a safe distance from the flames, except the few that were saved by repeated removals, were all consumed. Every inflammable substance over the whole extent of the field of

wind is reduced to ashes. Merciful Heaven! to what destruction hast thou brought us! was the involuntary expression of every heart.

From the commencement of the conflagration every thing that was possible was done to arrest the flames. The light wood pine buildings which were interspersed with the others, and the wooden warehouses, were but tinder. The engines played but for a few minutes, and were then deserted and consumed. Powder seemed our only hope, and on every side was heard the thunder and the shock of buildings which were blown to pieces. This, which was finally the instrument of arresting the fire in several directions, would have sooner been attended with success, had there been force sufficient to have dragged away the shattered timbers; but so exhausted had all become, and so rapid the march of the devouring element, that it became a hopeless attempt. Our only alternative was to retreat before it, and wait a favorable issue to our exertions. In about three hours and a half the fire assuaged; in so short a time was all this ruin accomplished.

The impression made on our hearts is indescribable; despair seems to reign in every countenance. Not a tear is shed; the horror stricken feelings of our poor sufferers have not yielded to tears.

We are now crowded together in the outskirts of the town, and many last night slept in the open air. The sufferings of our people must be immense; some of our most wealthy citizens, are stript of *all their property*, and have not where to lay their heads. Not even their clothes were saved. Though so far as can be ascertained no lives were lost, yet so exhausted and faint were many that they threw themselves down upon whatever chanced to be near them, and others fell down in the street, and were obliged to be carried home. We learn that numbers are sick; and to complete our misfortunes, all our medicine shops and medicine is destroyed.

But in the multitude of our afflictions we have reason to praise the Lord that our lives were spared. Amidst the confusion, and the explosions which occurred, it would seem that nothing less than the special protection of the Almighty defended us from danger. We have also reason to rejoice that our flight is not in the winter. The season is peculiarly favorable. It is our hope, that by the blessing of Providence, before the season for the fall business shall arrive, such provision may be made by our merchants for the carrying on of business that, our lives may be sustained, so that to the evils of *beggary*, may not be added those of *starvation*.

Yours with respect,

HENRY A. ROWLAND, Junr.



## DESTRUCTION OF FAYETTEVILLE.

*Part of the communication by the Editors of the North Carolina Journal, and Carolina bserver.*

“About 15 minutes after 12 o'clock A. M., on Sunday last, the citizens of Fayetteville were alarmed by the cry of Fire, and the other signals usual on such occasions. The roof of the kitchen belonging to Mr. James Kyle, near his brick building lately erected at the Northwest corner of Market Square, was found to be in a blaze, but to so inconsiderable an extent, that it was believed the efforts made to extinguish it would certainly be successful. Deceitful hope! They were all unavailing. In a very few moments the flames extended themselves to the large brick building, and to many small wooden buildings in its vicinity. In a few minutes more the roof of the Town House caught, and that building was soon enveloped in flames. From thence four large torrents of flame were seen pouring in as many directions along the four principal streets of the town with a rapidity and force which defied all stay or resistance. In a western direction the fire extended itself up Hay-street, on the right hand a short distance beyond the point of its intersection with Old-street, extending backwards in a northern direction to the very edge of the creek, embracing in its devouring sweep the intermediate buildings on Old-street and Maiden-lane. And on the left as far as Mr. Cannte's wooden building, being the next house below Mr. John Mc Rae's long row of wooden buildings, at the Wagon Yard, extending back southwardly to Franklin-street. Along Green-street the flames progressed northwardly, crossing the creek, and consuming in their transit Mr. Eccles's mill, store, and dwelling-house, and the handsome bridge erected a few years since by the town, sweeping before them many valuable buildings, including the Episcopal Church, on the right hand side of the street, until they reached the private residence of Jas. Seawell, Esq. which was saved, by a providential turn of the wind and the active exertions of a very few persons with water and blankets. On the left hand side of the street they progressed until they were stopped at the house of J. W. Wright, Esq. by blowing it up, and extended back until they reached the house of T. L. Hybart, Esq. which was saved by exertions of great activity and perseverance. Along Person-street they destroyed every building on both sides as far eastwardly as a few doors below Liberty Point, including the store of Mr. Wm. McIntyre, situate on the opposite point formed by the junction of Person-street and Cool Spring Alley, extending back northwardly as far as the edge of the creek, consuming the Presbyterian church, Catholic chapel, and all the other buildings, (with the exception of the dwelling-house, mills, and warehouse of Mr. James H. Hooper, all of which were saved with much exertion,) including the buildings on both sides of Bow-street. Along Gillespie-street, the flames extended as far as the State Bank building, on the right hand side, which being nearly fire proof enabled the citizens to contend successfully with the flames at that point, and to save that building.

On the eastern side of the street they destroyed every building to a point opposite the State Bank building, and extending eastwardly so as to include all but three of the buildings on Dick-street, between Person and Mumford-streets.

"It is impossible to form any correct estimate of the entire loss in real estate. There probably is no instance in history of so large a portion of a town being consumed, where it was not the result of voluntary human agency. The fire continued to rage with unabated fury until about six o'clock, when, by the blowing up of houses, and the other means usual on such occasions, it was suddenly deprived of food for its raging appetite.

"The public buildings destroyed were, the Town House, the Cape Fear Bank, the Catholic Chapel, the Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches, the Academy, the Lafayette and Mansion Hotels. The building in which the United States' Bank did business, and the office of the Agency of the State Bank, were also destroyed, but as they were merely rented for that purpose, they were not put down as public buildings. The private buildings destroyed, in number about SIX HUNDRED, would require a long catalogue to enumerate particularly.

"But besides the buildings, immense quantities of Books, valuable papers, money, household furniture, goods, wares, merchandise and produce, were destroyed. Where the fire first broke out, persons near the scene would remove such things to what were then supposed places of safety, but by the time they would get them fairly deposited they would discover the flames in hot pursuit of them, and would be driven to farther efforts for the security of their valuables, until driven from place to place, and completely worn down with their exertions, they would at last be compelled to abandon them to the power of the merciless flames:—a very small portion of any of these articles was saved. The amount destroyed it is difficult to estimate. We cannot undertake to offer a correct list of the houses, or even point out the principal sufferers. It would be infinitely more easy to make a catalogue of those of our citizens that have not suffered."

The loss on this occasion has been variously estimated, from a million to a million and a half of dollars. No sooner was it known than the sympathies of the whole country awakened, and contributions were made for the relief of the town. In Raleigh and Wilmington prompt measures were taken to meet with kindness and liberality our necessities. The return of every mail added fresh encouragement. The contributions were unexampled in liberality from every part of our country; and it is to these, that in a great measure, we are indebted for our returning prosperity. Our merchants were received with the greatest kindness by the merchants of New-York, who, in addition to their own severe losses by the fire, contributed liberally to the town, and assisted, by the credit which they extended to our merchants, to re-establish our business. The amount contributed for the relief of the town was not far from a *hundred thousand* dollars, which was distributed to those for whom it was designed.



As no part of the fund contributed to the town could be appropriated to the rebuilding of the church, and as there was no prospect that it could be rebuilt unless special effort were made for this purpose, a successful effort having been made just before the fire to free it of a debt of several thousand dollars, and as the means could not now be obtained in the town, it was resolved by the session to be expedient to solicit aid to rebuild the church. The following was adopted by the session, and put into my hands.

### STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

*Church Session of the Presbyterian Church of Fayetteville, June 4th, 1831.*

The Lord, in his righteous providence, has seen fit to desolate our town by conflagration. The devouring element, in four short hours, has laid our high places waste, and our temples and dwellings in ashes. Nothing remains to tell the place where Fayetteville was, but naked chimneys and crumbling walls. Our worldly substance is gone; and we desire, more than ever, to seek an enduring substance—a heavenly inheritance. But, alas! we have no shelter but the broad canopy of heaven, under which to meet and render praise and homage to the Most High. To him our petitions are directed, beseeching that he would, of his infinite goodness and mercy, open the hearts of the friends of Zion to contribute of their substance for the rebuilding of our church.

Our much respected pastor elect, the Rev. Henry A. Rowland, Jun., is authorized and requested, on behalf of our congregation, to solicit funds for this object. We bid him God speed: and we humbly pray that every giver may be rewarded ten-fold in this life, and, in the world to come, may receive life everlasting.

DAVID D. SALMON,  
H. POTTER,  
D. ANDERSON,  
E. STEDMAN,  
GEO. M'NEILL,  
D. A. DAVIS,

*Elders composing  
the Session of the  
Presbyterian Ch.  
at Fayetteville.*

It was found, in a short time, to be impossible to visit every town where it would be desirable to solicit aid; and, accordingly, the following letter, together with the sessional paper above, was printed in the form of a circular, and sent to many churches, from which collections were afterward received.

*"Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste. Isaiah, 64 : 11.*

It is believed that history does not record so great a proportionable destruction of a town by an accidental fire, as that of Fayetteville. We had



just returned from church, on Sabbath morning, the 29th of May, when a fire was discovered near the centre of our town, which in less than *four* hours reduced the most of it to ashes. One hundred and five stores, which, with the exception of three, were all that we had, with their numerous warehouses, and most of their contents, three churches, the two banking houses, the two spacious hotels, the old state house, the academy, bridges, mills, and very many dwelling houses, amounting in all to about *SIX HUNDRED* buildings, are wholly consumed.

Our distress is inconceivably great. Through the benevolent exertions of our fellow citizens in different parts of the country, we have the prospect of obtaining relief from bodily suffering. But in this provision for our temporal wants, we do not see the re-establishment of our religious privileges. It is now, since our worldly prospects are blighted, that we desire more than ever the privileges and consolations of the Gospel. We do cling with fondness to the expectation of again meeting God in his sanctuary. It is a hope we delight to cherish; and the anticipation of disappointment in this, would throw a deeper gloom over us than did the smoking ruins of all that we possessed.

Were our church only consumed, we should possess the means to erect another; but now all our worldly substance is gone, and without aid a large and flourishing congregation must be annihilated. But, though reduced to poverty, we are here, and will here remain. Here are our connections, our business, and our hopes of rising prosperity. The town, from its local situation and advantages of trade, must, and undoubtedly will be built up; but, in this case, it will be years before we shall be able to erect a church. In that time, without a sanctuary, the flock of Christ will be scattered.

The rebuilding of our church at this time would be a great public advantage. It would give stability to our population, and confidence to the community and to our back country in the re-establishment of our town. It would thus tend to prevent our trade from being diverted, and our future prospects ruined. To the prosperity of the cause of Christ it is every thing—it is our *all*. The walls are mostly standing, and we are informed by a good architect, that *seven thousand dollars* would repair it in a plain way, which is much less than a wooden building of the same size could be provided for. It originally cost about *twenty-six thousand dollars*, and was entirely free from debt. Our commodious session house, adjacent, was also destroyed, just at a season when of all others such a loss is most severely felt.

Such are the facts in our case, which, notwithstanding the multitude of claims on your benevolence, we hope will share your favorable regards. Whatever assistance you may be disposed to render us, will be received with the grateful acknowledgments of a people who, while their ability lasted, have ever opened their hearts to relieve the distressed.

*In behalf of the Presbyterian Church and Congregation of Fayetteville,*

HENRY A. ROWLAND, Jun.

Many of the principal towns in the northern section of the country were visited; and from many churches at the south, and from places which were not visited, donations were received. The funds collected amounted to a sum almost sufficient to replace our church and session house.

Some individuals of the second church in Troy, learning that application had been made to a founder to recast our bell, generously took upon themselves the task of supplying the loss of metal, which was great, and furnish us with a new bell. The motto cast on it is as follows:

IN FLAMMIS PERII XXIX MAII, A. D. MDCCCXXXI.  
MUNERE AMICORUM E CINERE SURREXI.

I perceive that the same motto has since been substantially adopted for the bell of the Episcopal church. The plan of the church was furnished gratuitously by Messrs. Town & Davis, Architects, New-York. The builders were Messrs. Wright & Wooster. It is a plain, neat, and substantial building, and will accommodate more than a *thousand* persons with seats.

THE END.